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The HISTORY of
Four K I N G S.

Their Queens and Daughters.

K I N G S of

CANTERBURY, | CORNWALL,
COLCHESTER, | CUMBERLAND.

Being the Merry Tales of

T O M H O D G E.

And his School-Fellows.



Printed and Sold in Aldermanry Church-
Yard, Bow-Lane, London.



T H E P R E F A C E

NOT to detain the reader with many words to little purpose ; I shall only here observe, That Tom Hodge with the rest of his old companions, belonging to the school of Cockermouth, was walking on a very pleasant morning in May, and having tired themselves with pranks and intrigues, towards evening they sat themselves down by a green bank, beneath a lovely oak, where they agreed amongst themselves that every one should tell a Tale, let a Fart, or call his Father a Cuckold ; and because Tom was the oldest scholar, it was concluded and agreed upon that he should begin first.

Says Tom, with all my heart,
So I'll begin my part.

TALE

TALE I.

Once upon a time when geese were swine, and birds built nests in old men's beards, as hereafter they may do in mine, there was a queen in this realm, whose name was Elizabeth, and by reason that the famous town of Laneashire was strangely pestered with witches the queen sent some judges down to arraign and try



them in order to bring them to Justice
Now the news of this court being kept

in Lancashire, spread through all the country, so that a husbandman living near forty miles from the place, hearing of this news, and believing they were come to tell the folks whether they were Witches or no, resolved to go to be satisfied in himself, for he was possessed with a fear that he was a witch, because he had a whart grew on his neck, which he imagined to be a dug.

His wife who had a friend in a corner, and therefore glad of his absence, did not only give her consent, but also drest him in his best leathern suit and broad brim'd hat — So taking leave of his good wife Joan he trudged on day and night until he came to the place where the court was kept: so pushing on and pressing through the crowd, the cryer of the court believing him to be some evidence, immediately gave orders that they should let him in; which was soon done, and he was required to speak what he had to say —

W^t says the countryman d'ye see, I've a dug upon my neck, which makes me afraid I am a Witch, and folks tell me, that these vine gentlemen, pointing to the Judges, can tell a body whether one is a

witch or no.— The Cryer of the Court seeing the simplicity of the man, said, No, no, my friend, I can assure thee thou art no witch ; thou lookest more like a cuckold than a witch or a conjuror. — I thank you sur ; and zo zays these vine gentlemen. Then having given three or four scrapes, and half a dozen congees he came back as wile as Waltham's calf. — The next day he was met with his wife, who waited for his return at the town's end, to whom she said, Well husband, what do the gentleman say ? are you a Witch or no ? A witch, sweet wife, no ; they tells a body one looks more like a cuckold than a witch or a conjuror. Why say you so, replied she, I prifhee go back and have them taken up for witches, for except they had been so, they would not have known you was a cuckold.

This scurvy tale so pleased them, that they set up a hearty laugh, which being ended, the second boy began his tale in the following manne.

TALE

T A L E II.

IN the days of yore when this land was governed by many Kings, among the rest the King of Canterbury had an only daughter, and she was wise, fair, and beautiful. Her father sent forth a decree, that whoever would watch one night with his daughter, and neither sleep nor slumber, he should have her the next day in marriage; but if he did either he should lose his head.—Many Knights and Squires attempted it, but lost their heads.

Now it happened a young shepherd grazing his flock near the road, said to the master, Zur, I zee many gentlemen ride to the court at Canterbury, but ne'er zee 'em return again. O shepherd, said his master, I know nothow you shoul', for they attempt to watch with the King's daughter, according to the decree, and not performing it, they are all beheaded. Well, said the shepherd, I'll try my vor-von, zo now vor a King's daughter or a headless shepherd, so taking his bottle and bag, he trudged to court. Now in

his way he was to cross a river, over which lay a plank; down he sits, and pulling off his shoes and stockings to wash his feet, lest the smell of his toes might be a means of keeping her awake; while he was washing his feet, a fish came smelling and biting his toes, he caught it and put it into his bag; after which came a second, a third, and a fourth, which he caught, and put in his bag, likewise; this done, and having dried his feet, he put on his shoes and stockings, and pursued his journey till he came to the palace, where he knocked loudly with his crook. He was no sooner let in, and having told his business, but was conducted to a hall prepared for that purpose where the king's daughter sat ready to receive him; and the better to lull his senses, he was placed in a rich easy chair, having delicious wines for his supper with many fine dishes of fruit &c. of which the shepherd eat and drank plentifully, insomuch that he began to slumber before midnight. O shepherd, said the lady, have I caught you napping? — Noa, zweet lady, I was busy. At what said she? Why a feeshing. Nay, shepherd, there is no fish pond in the hall.—

gave him leave to sleep, promising to excuse him to her father.

In the morning the King came into the hall as usual, followed by the headsman, with the hatchet; but the lady cried out You may return with your hatchet, here is no work for you.—How so, said the King, has he neither slumbered nor slept? —No, royal father he has not. How has he employed himself? In fishing.—Why there is never a fish pond, where did he catch them? One in his own backfide, and two in mine. Say you so well friend, dost think thou canst catch one in mine? An't please you my liege, I believe I can. Then directing him to lie on his belly, he pricked him with a packing-needle, which made him cry out exceedingly; at which time he drew the other fish out of the bag, and shewed it to the King. His Majesty said, He never knew such a sort of fishing before; however, take my daughter, according to my royal decree; and so they were married, and the shepherd became a king's son.

O that was mighty well, said the third boy, he had wonderful good fortune;

No matter vor that, I have been feeshing
—Says the lady, where do you feesh? O
quoth, he in my backside.—O me, have
you catched e'er a one? —Ah, lady, said
he.—I'd willingly see it, replied she.—
Ay, an't pleased you you shall with all my
yeart.—This said, he slyly drew out one
of the fishes out of the bag, at the sight of
which she was greatly pleased, and prais-
ed it for a pretty fish; and withal, said,
Dear shepherd, do you think you could
catch one in mine too? —Ay, ay, doubt-
less I can.—Then she laying according to
his directions, he fell to feeshing, and in
a short time drew a second fish out of the
bag, pretending he drew it from her.—
The King's daughter was so pleased with
it, that she kissed it, declaring it was the
finest she ever saw. And about half an
hour after, she said, Shepherd, do you
think you could get me one more? He
answered, Mayhap I may, when I have
bated my hook. Then make haste, for I
am impatient till I have another. Then
the shepherd acted as before, and so pro-
fessed her with another fish; which she
also extolled and praised, saying, It was
ten times finer than the other; and then

this puts me in mind of a story which I will now tell in my turn.

T A L E III.

If I may believe my old gran'mother, there lived in the county of Cumberland, a Nobleman, who had three sons, two of which were comely and tall youths wise and learned. The third a metry fool, and went often in a party coloured coat and steep'e-coloured hat, at the top of which was a tassel, in this dress he made a comical figure. — At this time the king of Canterbury had a fine daughter, adorned with all the gifts of nature, joined to an ingenious education; she being very ripe witted, as appears by her ready answers, and the comical questions she put forth — The king her father published a decree, that whoever should come to the court, and answer his daughter three questions without study or stumbling he should have her in marriage, and also be heir to the crown at his decease. — upon publishing this decree, the said gentleman's

two sons agreed between themselves to go and try how favourable fortune might be to them in this undertaking; but all their cares was, what they should do with their silly brother Jack; for as they said, if he follows us, he will out with some foolish bolt, and so spoil our business. At length it was agreed to go out at the back door, which led to the road over several fields, about a mile from the house to the court. They did, but were no sooner got into the highway, but looking behind they saw their brother Jack coming capering and dancing after them, saying with a loud laughter, See, you are going to get a king's daughter, but I will pursue you. They saw there was no way to get rid of him, but by walking fast, and left him behind hoping thereby to get entrance before Jack, and then have the gates shut against him. They had not gone half a mile before Jack set up a great fit of laughter, at which one of his brothers said, What's the fool found out now? Why I've found an egg. Put it in thy pocket, said his brothers. Adad, and so I will, says Jack. —Presently after he was taken with another fit of laughter. What's the fool

found now? What have I found, says Jack, why a crooked stick. They bid him put that in his pocket. Ay, marry will I — They had not walked much further, before Jack burst into a greater fit of laughter than before, his brother said, What's the fool found now? Found, why a turd — Put that in your pocket. I intend it, says Jack. Now by this time they were come near the palace gate, at which they no sooner knocked before they were admitted. But Jack never stood for ce remonies, but run through the midst of the court, and as the wise brothers were making their addresses, Jack was laughing at the ladies ; unto whom he said, What a troop of fair Ladies are got here. O yes, yes, said the King's daughter, who was among them, we are fair ladies, for we carry fire in our arses. Do you, said Jack, then roast me an egg. How will you get it out again? By a crooked stick which I have. A turd you will said she — I have it in my pocket, says Jack, — In this Jack answered the three questions proposed. Then he was preferred to that honour which was mentioned in the decree. His two wise brothers then went

home like two fools, and left foolish Jack to be reverenced at court, with the king's fair daughter.

Said the fourth boy, this verifies the old Proverb, Fools have fortune; besides it has put me in mind of a story that was told me by my aunt.

T A L E - IV.

LONG before Arther and the Knight of the Round Table, reigned in the eastern part of this land, a king, who kept his court at Colchester. He was witty, strong and valiant: by which means he, subdued his enemies abroad, and planted peace among his subjects at home.

Nevertheless, in the midst of all his earthly glory, his queen died, leaving behind her an only daughter, about fifteen years of age, under the care of her royal husband. This lady for her courtly carriage, beauty, and affability, was the wonder of all that knew her; but as covetousness is the root of all evil, so it happened here.

The King hearing of a Lady who had likewise an only daughter, for the sake of her riches had a mind to marry her; tho' she was old, ugly, hook-nos'd, and hump-back'd, yet all could not deter him from marrying her. The daughter of the said piece of deformity was a yellow dowdy, full of envy and ill-nature, and in short was much of the same mould as her mother. This signified nothing, for in a few weeks, the king, attended by the nobility and gentry, brought the said piece of deformity to his palace where the marriage rites were performed. Long they had not been in the court before they set the king against his own beautiful daughter, which was done by false reports and accusations. The young princess having lost her father's love, grew weary of the court, and on a certain day meeting with her father in the garden, she desired him with tears in her eyes to give her a small subsistence, and she would go and seek her fortune, to which the king consented, and ordered her mother-in-law to make up a small sum according to her discretion. To her she went, who gave her a canvas bag of brown bread and hard

cheese with a bottle of beer; though this was but a very pitiful dowery for a king's daughter. She takes ^{it}, returns thanks, and so proceeded, passing through groves woods and valleys, till at length she saw an old man sitting on a stone at the mouth of a cave, who said Good-morrow, fair maiden, whither away so fast? Aged father says she, I am going to seek my fortune. What hast thou in thy bag and bottle? In my bag I have got bread and cheese, and in my bottle good small beer; will you please to partake of either? Yes said he, with all my heart.—With that the Lady pulled out her provision, and bid him eat and welcome. He did and gave her many thanks telling her there was a thick thorny hedge before her which will appear to you impassable, but take this wand in your hand, strike three times, and say, pray hedge let me come through, and it will open immediately: then a little furthir you will find a well, sit down in the brink of it, and there will come up three golden heads, which will speak, and what they require that do. Then promising she would, she took her leave of him.— Coming to the hedge and following the

old man's directions, the hedge divided, and gave her a passage ; then coming to the well, she had not sooner sat down but a Golden Hand came up with a singing note, Wash me, comb me, lay me down softly, Yes, said the young lady, then putting forth her hand with a silver comb, performed the office, placing it upon a primrose bank. Then came up a second and a third, saying as the former, which she complied with ; and then pulling out her provision, eat her dinner. Then said the Heads one to aother, What shall we do for this lady, who hath used us so very kindly ?—The first said, I will cause such addition to her beauty, that shall charm the most powerful prince in the world. The second said, I will endow her with such perfumes both in body and breath, as shall far exceed the sweetest flowers. The third said, My gift shall be none of the least, for as she is a King's daughter, I'll make her so fortunate that she shall become queen to the greatest Prince that reigns.—This done, at their request, she let them down into the well again, and proceeded on her journey.—She had not travelled long before she saw a King

hunting in the park, with his nobles ; she would have shunned him, but the King having a sight of her, made towards her, and between her beauty, and perfumed breath, was so powerfully smitten that he was not able to subdue his passion, but proceeded on his courtship : where after some compliments and kind embraces, he gained her love. And bringing her to his palace, he caused her to be clothed in the most magnificent manner.

This being ended, and the King finding that she was the king of Colchester's daughter, ordered some chariots to be got ready, that he might pay him a visit. The chariot in which the king and queen rode was beautified with rich ornamental gems of gold. The king her father was at first astonished that his daughter had been so fortunate as she was, till the young king made him sensible of all that had happened. Great was the joy at court among the nobility, except the queen and her club-footed daughter, who was ready to burst with malice, and envied her happiness ; and the greater was their madness because she was now above them all. — Great rejoicings with feasting and dancing

continued many days, Then at length, with the dowry her father gave her, they returned home.

Well, said the fifth boy, had she not been kind and beautiful, such good fortune had never come to her lot. And pray what become of her hump-back'd sister-in-law? — Indeed I do not know. — Why then said the fifth boy, I can tell you something of her.

T A L E V.

SHE perceiving that her sister was so happy in seeking her fortune, would needs do the same; so disclosing her mind to her mother all preparations was made; not only rich apparel but sweetmeats, sugar almonds, &c. in great quantities, and a large bottle of Malaga Sack. Furnished thus she went the same road as her sister, and coming near the cave, there sat the old man, who said, Young woman, whither so fast? — What is that to you, said she. — Then said he, What have you in your bag and bottle? She answered, good

things, which you shall not be troubled with. Won't you give me some, said he? No, not a bit nor a drop, unless it would choak you. The old man frowned, saying, Evil fortune attend thee.—Going on she come to the hedge, through which she espied a gap, where she thought to pass but going in, the hedge, closed, and the thorns run into her flesh, so that with great difficulty she got out. Being now in a bloody condition, she looks for water to wash herself and looking round she saw a well, and sitting down, one of the Heads came up to her, saying, Wash me, comb me, lay me down softly. But she bang'd it with her bottle, saying, Hang you, take this for your washing. So the second and third Heads came up, and met with no better welcome than the first whereupon the heads consulted among themselves what evils to plague her with for such usage. The first said, let her be struck with leprosy in her face. The second said, Let an additional stink be added to her breath. The third bestowed on her a hasband, though but a poor country cobler.—This done she goes on till she came to a market town, and it he-

ing market day, the people smelt a stink, and seeing such a many face, all fled; but a poor cobler who not long before had mended the shoes of an old hermit, who having no money, gave him a box of ointment for the cure of the depo-
sy, and a bottle of spirits for a stinking breath. Now the cobler having a mind to do an act of charity was minded to try an experiment; so going up to her, asked her who she was? — I am, said she, the King of Golchester's daughter in law. — Well, said the Cobler, if I restore you to your natural complexion, and make a sound cure both in face and breath, will you not reward take me for a husband? — Yes, friend, replied she, with all my heart. — With this the cobler applied the remedies, and they worked the effect in a few weeks, where being done, they were married. After some few days spent in town, they set forward for the court at Golchester. At length coming there, and the queen understanding she had married nothing but a poor cobler, fell into dis-
traction, and in wrath hanged herself. The death of the queen pleased the King much, who was glad he had got rid of

he soon. Having buried her, he gave the cobler one hundred pounds, on condition that he and his lady would quit the court. The Cobler received it, and promised he would. Then setting up his trade in a remote part of the kingdom, they lived many years, he mended shoes, and she spinning thread.

Quoth the sixth boy, I think for a King's daughter she hath spun a very fine thread. But now for my story,

T A L E VI.

A Tinker in your town had but one daughter, whose name was Tib, and because her father would not let her marry a miller's man named Jobson, nothing would serve her but the must go and seek her fortune; so over hills and mountains, through groves and lonesome woods she passed; till at length she met with an old woman, who said unto Tib, Where are you going? To seek a service, says Tib. Will you live with me, replied the old woman? my family's small, myself, my cat, and my dog. Tib answered.

With all my heart. So home they went to her cottage, which stood by the side of a grove, on the bank of a pleasant river. She no sooner entered in at the door, but she beheld the shelves furnished with abundance of earthen ware and glasses. — She had not lived long with her before Tib had committed a fault; for which the old woman was resolved to break every bone in her skin. To that end she put her into a sack, and having tied the mouth of the same, she went to the grove to cut a stick; but while she was gone, Tib with a penknife opened the sack, and got out: and she put the dog and cat into it, filling it up with pans, pipkins, &c. then dragged it to the door, that the old woman might not come in to miss them, who on her return thought that Tib had howled thither, began to lay on like a fury: when the dog howled, the cat mewed, and the pipkins cracked; while the old woman cries out, Ah! howl if you will and be pox'd, for before you come out of this sack, I'll thrash your bones to chaff. Now Tib stood at a distance, laughing to see how busy she was in destroying her

own furniture, then fled for it, and never after returned.

It was well she did, replied the seventh boy, or else the old woman would certainly have been revenged on Tib at last. — But now for my story, which shall be the last at this meeting.

T A B L E VII.

A Young man having found a purse in which was five pounds, he made proclamation that if any one would lay any just claim to it, to come to such a tavern, and they should have it again. To the tavern he went, where in meat and drink he spent a crown. At last when the young man was ready to go the owner came and demanded the purse, which he was ready to surrender; but the owner knowing a crown was spent, he would not receive it unless he made up the whole sum. The young man told him he could not, so an officer was sent for; but before he came the youth took to his heels and run for it with that swiftness, that an ass standing in his way, he took hold of his tail to swing himself by, and twitches it off. A little

farther he threw a woman with child and caused her to miscarry. At length he was taken and brought before a Justice by the three sufferers.—Having heard their complaints, he turned to the young man, and said, Young man, several complaints are here laid against you, which I shall clear up. First keep the money you have found and trade with it, till you have improved it so far as to make him satisfaction, and then let him have it.— You take the ~~ass~~, and work him till a new tail grows, then give him to his owner.—And you take the woman home, and lie with her till she is as far gone with child as she was before, and then send her home to her husband. So with these determinations he dismissed them.

F. B. N. I. S.